Some things that keep us from God

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Some things that Keep us from God.

2 Cor. 13:11 Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace; and the God of love & peace shall be with you.

Moffatt — Mend your ways, listen to what I have told you, live in harmony, keep the peace, then the God of love and peace will be with you.

Intro — The reading of Moffat's translation of 2 Cor. 13 fully explains the text. Why chosen theme, "Some things that Keep me from God," had better been worded, "How can we get closer to God." This is going to be a Lenten meditation, & the purpose of Lent is to open up our way to God,

~~I. Be perfected Mend Your ways.~~

I. Be perfected; Mend your ways.

1. There were two classes of believers in the Ch. at Corinth whom St. Paul had to call to account — those

1 who indulged in lustful habits and those who endeavored to make Jews return to Judaism. Before either group could get close to God in Christ their ways had to be mended, for their ways prevented their way to God.

2. If the Apostle Paul were addressing us Jews of today at this Lenten season, would he not admonish us likewise, would he not tell us to mend our ways?

a- We ordinarily think of sin as the main reason why many do not accept Christ and become reconciled to God. No doubt many, because of their selfish interests and sinful desires, do not accept Christ.

But it is also true that many professing Christians do not enjoy close fellowship with God for the same reason — they live selfish lives and practice sinful ways. In their business conduct as in their pleasures they are anything but Jews. They allow worldly attractions and

3/ selfish indulgences to choke what little spirituality they have. Their light and frivolous spirit, their social whispering, slandering and backbiting, their careless and impure conversations, their intemperate and immoral practices and hurtful amusements, their gambling, cheating and defrauding to gain ease & comfort all these and many other sins, act as a smoke-screen between them and their God.

Ah, Christians of America, would you really and truly draw nigh to God, would you gain for your souls peace and poise? Mend your ways.

Jesus put his finger on the point where God and man meet when he said to the woman of Samaria - "God is Spirit and they that worship Him, must worship him in Spirit & Truth."

That woman of Samaria was like many Christians who are interested in religious questions and forms of worship and doctrines of belief as intellectual opinion but whose inner life is

4 is at cross purposes with the moral Law of God.

b - I also believe that St. Paul would tell us Xns of this generation to mend our ways for the same reason that he told those Corinthians who were trying to make believers in Christ return to Judaism.

If the apostles and Christ should make their appearance upon earth today, would not they be amazed at these world situations of our Xty? After 2000 yrs of preaching the Gospel, to find their truth and their way ~~impressed~~ in so many different creeds & ~~beliefs~~, their followers at loggerheads over non-essentials of belief while atheistic and materialistic systems are growing rampant the world over!

Xty crushed in Russia!

" bleeding to death in Germany

" fighting for its existance in other countries side by side with the heathen religions

yet ~~organized Xty~~ more concerned with our creeds and forms of worship and apostolic succession than over the salvation of the world!

5/ Methodists, Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Disciples of Christ, Unitarians, Lutherans and all the rest of you, mend your ways; before the world is utterly lost to Xn influence!

II. Listen to what I have told you, ~~keep the peace~~ live in harmony, keep the peace - then the God of love and peace will be with you.

As Paul said to the Corinthians - Put yourselves to the proof, not me, so he says to each Xn of today - put yourself to the proof, and don't criticize your condemn the other fellow.

The Xn experience is first of all a personal matter

We cannot be casual about our religious life and expect to gain real knowledge of God. Anything that is worth while deserves all the concentration we can command. The need to examine our minds and hearts & souls for tendencies that hinder our being able to discover God within ourselves. If our

6/ dominant desires are spiritual and in harmony with the great laws of God, nothing can prevent their fulfillment. Is God a mere thesis, or an actual experience in our lives? What proof of the reality of God do we seek most to have?

All the advance of knowledge in the world has come because earnest minds have been persistently seeking + searching ~~and~~ ~~searching~~. They always get light for the next step toward their goal.

God compares Himself with the parent who lives for his child and gives it every good thing he possesses. Surely the Heavenly Father from whom we come is infinitely more loving and ambitious for His children than any earthly father can be. This marvelous conception of god is Jesus' special contribution to the world and is the most satisfying one we have known.

Thou God of Love and Peace, our Father, give us the courage to be still and know that thou art God. Thou didst speak to men of old in a still small voice. Speak thou also unto us this day. ~~Draw nigh to God & he will draw nigh to you~~ Amen.